

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in this application.

Discrepancies with Double Patenting Rejections

The Applicants do not understand the grounds of either of the two separate Double Patenting Rejections included in the January 9, 2007 Office Action for the reasons presented below.

Double Patenting Rejection - based on U.S. Patent No. 7,020,127

The Examiner rejected claims 1-18 of the instant application on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent No. 7,020,127. The inventorship of this patent only has one inventor in common with the instant application. Furthermore, this patent has only 19 claims, not the 20 as asserted by the Examiner), which are substantially different than claims 1-18 of the instant application. The Applicants submit that the Examiner is incorrect in asserting that the limitations of claims 1-18 of the instant application are encompassed by the limitations of the claims of U.S. Patent No. 7,020,127. If the Examiner disagrees, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner specifically point out where in the claims 1-19 of U.S. Patent No. 7,020,127 that the limitations of the instant application are encompassed.

Based on the above arguments, the withdrawal of the double patenting rejection based on U.S. Patent No. 7,020,127 is respectfully requested.

Double Patenting Rejection - based on copending Application No. 11/023,858

The Examiner provisionally rejected claims 1-18 of the instant application on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being

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unpatentable over claims 1-20 of copending Application No. 11/023,858. This rejection was included in the August 23, 2006 Office Action, and the Examiner acknowledges at the beginning of the January 9, 2007 Office Action that this rejection was withdrawn based on the Applicants' submitted Terminal Disclaimer filed on October 11, 2006.

Based on the above arguments, the withdrawal of the double patenting rejection based on copending Application No. 11/023,858 is respectfully requested.

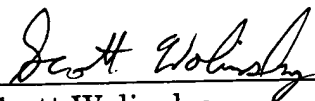
Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, or that a telephone interview will help to materially advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application, including claims 1-18, is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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